



## Romanian Center Helps the Disabled



Photo: GRASP/ Monica Terean

A disabled Romanian weaves yarn to produce handicrafts sold during Christmas to help sustain the Handicapped Society of Zalau supported by USAID.

“For the first time ever, one donor [USAID] has assisted us in creating a strong local partnership both with local authorities and the non-governmental sector. As a result, we are now working closely with Zalau City Hall and several local civil society organizations.”

- Mrs. Rodica Marian,  
Director of Societatea  
Handicapator Zalau

In 2003, the Center for Integration by Means of Occupational Therapy was launched by the Handicapped Society of Zalau to support people with disabilities from villages and neighboring rural areas in Romania. USAID, through its Governance Reform and Sustainable Partnerships program, has provided a grant to strengthen the public-private partnership between the Society and the municipal government of Zalau.

The support helped in evaluating and assisting thirty-five severely disabled young people who were unable to participate in any educational or professional development programs because buildings were physically inaccessible and no programs existed to address their particular needs. The beneficiaries of the program have already produced handicrafts, artwork, and candles to raise additional money to sustain the organization. A winter fundraising campaign included the production of Christmas cards, candles, and other crafts produced by the beneficiaries.

First Person

